

Governor's Traumatic Brain Injury Council

January 14, 2016

Education and Local Government Committee Meeting

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Advisory Council Members:

Angela Wathan, Whitefish, MT - Chair

Richard Felix, Saint Ignatius, MT- Vice Chair, Advocate for Brain-Injured Person

Kathy Smith, Great Falls, MT - Secretary, Advocate for Brain Injured Persons

Micky Brown, Helena, MT, Department Designee: Department of Public Health and Human Services Representative for Richard Opper

Francisco Roman, Helena, MT, Department Designee: Superintendent of Public Instruction Representative for Denise Juneau

Teresa McKeon, Malta, MT, Survivor or Family of Survivor of Traumatic Brain Injury

Charles Gutierrez, Vaughn, MT, Survivor or Family of Survivor of Traumatic Brain Injury

Vacant Positions, 2

Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Council Mission

Advise and make recommendations to the Department and other state agencies on ways to improve and develop services regarding brain injury, including coordination of services between public and private entities.

Encourage citizen participation through the establishment of public hearings and other types of community outreach and prevention activities.

Encourage and stimulate research, public awareness, education, and prevention activities.

Advise the Department on the expenditures of the brain injury account established in MCA 2-15-2218 and any grants made from that account.

The Council's mission shall also be to make recommendations to the Indian Nations on ways to improve and develop services regarding brain injury, including coordination of services between public, tribal, and private entities.

Topics Currently Under Consideration by the TBI Council:

Develop Consistent Return to Play/Learn Protocols and Treatments (RTP/RTL) for all Licensed Health Care Providers.

The council has concerns with the inconsistent application of RTP/RTL protocols. The TBI council is in support of the development of a committee of experts that would provide evidenced based consensus statements and recommendations regarding Montana youth sports concussion policy.

More training for licensed health care providers.

The Council feels more training is necessary for licensed health care providers. The American Medical Society for Sports Medicine, the American Academy of Neurology, and the Consensus Statement of the 4th International Conference on Concussion in Sport in Zurich, November 2012, state that more training is needed for licensed health care providers who determine when youth athletes can safely return to play or to school.

Strengthen the Dylan Steigers Act.

The TBI Council would encourage the addition of the following language to the Dylan Steigers Protection of Youth Athletes Act:

Suspected Concussion: "When in Doubt Sit Them Out."

When a concussion occurs, it can take days to weeks for neurological loss to happen (delayed symptoms). The goal is to protect children from further neurological damage. When a concussion is suspected it is best to "sit the child out".

Sanctioned:

The TBI Council is concerned that youth athletes participating in organized sports not sanctioned by schools will not receive the evaluations necessary to ensure they are protected from concussion injuries. The TBI Council would like the law to apply the standards of protection of youth athletes to all youth athletic sports no matter the venue, so that the same requirements and protections extend to all youth athletes.

No legislative action has been approved at this point to move this language forward related to the Dylan Steigers Protection of Youth Athletes Act.